

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application and claims in light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 1 and 3-11 remain pending. Claim 2 was previously cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 1, 9 and 10 have been amended. No new matter is added. Support for the amendments can be found, e.g., at paragraphs [0014], [0016] and [0029] of Applicants' originally-filed specification.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,931,622 to Ohtsuki et al. ("Ohtsuki") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,089,457 to LaManna et al. ("LaManna"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to recite that "the card support surface extends in a horizontal direction and has an area enough to arrange a plurality of cards and to slide a selected one of the plurality of cards while abutting the card against the card end surface." According to an instruction given to the player of the game, the player may select one of the plurality of cards arranged on the card support surface and slide it against the card end surface to proceed with the game. *See, e.g., paragraph [0029] of Applicants' originally-filed specification.* With such a configuration, "the game machine . . . can read information on a lot of cards in a limited period of time and give various changes to the content of a game." *See, e.g., paragraph [0014] of Applicants' originally-filed specification.* Applicants respectfully submit that Ohtsuki and LaManna, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest this feature.

By contrast, the cardholder 15 of Ohtsuki is configured for only one card and not a plurality of cards as presently claimed. *See Ohtsuki, Figures 3A and 3B.* Ohtsuki describes that the abutting portion 57 is pushed and moved downwardly by inserting the card into the cardholder 15 such that

the contact terminals of the card touch the contact terminals 26 of the receiving device. *See Ohtsuki, col. 4, lines 10-28.* Thus, the device of Ohtsuki is capable of receiving only one card at a time and does not provide a support surface for a plurality of cards.

Likewise, the device of LaManna is configured to read or write to cards one at a time and does not provide a support surface for a plurality of cards from which a card can be selected and slid against the card end surface. LaManna describes a card transport path 108 extending from an infeed side 182 to an outfeed side 184. *See LaManna, col. 31, lines 34-47.* A carriage 196 formed by a pair of channels 186, 188 is provided with a transport mechanism 180 for moving the carriage 196 and a card 114 from the infeed side 182 to the outfeed side 184 and for returning it to the infeed side 182 to receive another card 114 between first and second card contacting elements 198, 200. *See id.; see also LaManna, col. 30, lines 5-15.* Therefore, even if the carriage can be seen as a card support surface, it is configured to carry only one card at a time; it does not provide a horizontal surface for arranging a plurality of cards and only a single card at any given time can be selected due to fixed mechanical transport paths. Further, the cards are not slid as presently claimed, but rather are moved by the carriage.

Since Ohtsuki and LaManna, taken alone or in combination fail to disclose or suggest a card support surface to arrange a plurality of cards and slide a selected one of the cards against the card end surface, they can not render claims 1 or 9 obvious. Additionally, since claims 3 and 4 depend from claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that claims 3 and 4 are allowable for at least this reason. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3, 4 and 9 based on Ohtsuki and LaManna is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohtsuki in view of LaManna and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 3,553,436 to Webb ("Webb"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Ohtsuki and LaManna, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest a card support surface to arrange a plurality of cards and slide a selected one of the cards against the card end surface as presently called for in claim 1.

Webb likewise fails to disclose or suggest such a feature; rather, Webb merely describes a static card reader, into which perforated cards are inserted by hand. *See Webb, col. 10, lines 63-64*. Since claim 5 depends from claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 5 is allowable for at least this reason. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 5 based on Ohtsuki, LaManna and Webb is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 6, 7 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohtsuki in view of LaManna and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,596,668 to Berbeco ("Berbeco"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Ohtsuki and LaManna, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest a card support surface to arrange a plurality of cards and slide a selected one of the cards against the card end surface as presently called for in claims 1 and 10. Berbeco likewise fails to disclose or suggest such a feature; rather, Berbeco is directed to a coating for floors. *See Berbeco, Abstract*. Since claims 6 and 7 depend from claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 6 and 7 are allowable for at least this reason. Additionally, since claim 10 has been amended to include this feature of claim 1 as recited therein, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 10 is allowable for at least this reason. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6, 7 and 10 based on Ohtsuki, LaManna and Berbeco is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 8 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohtsuki in view of LaManna and Berbeco and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,098,889 to Ogawa et al. ("Ogawa"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Ohtsuki, LaManna and Berbeco, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest a card support surface to arrange a plurality of cards and slide a selected one of the cards against the card end surface as presently called for in claims 1 and 10. Ogawa likewise fails to disclose or suggest such a feature; rather, Ogawa merely describes a multi-layered recording medium and is silent as to any form of support surface. *See Ogawa, Abstract and col. 3, lines 4-13*. Since claims 8 and 11 depend directly or

indirectly from claims 1 and 10, respectively, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 8 and 11 are allowable for at least this reason. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 8 and 11 based on Ohtsuki, LaManna, Berbeco and Ogawa is therefore respectfully requested.

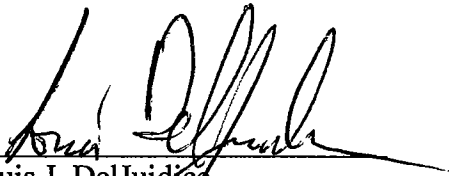
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and arguments, the subsisting claims in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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